

Checking in on our future

WHERE DO WE GROW FROM HERE?

CLARK COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN 2004 year-end summary

Questions about the future direction of the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan now center on 14 petitions for review recently filed with the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board.

The hearings board will determine whether the county plan adopted on September 7, 2004, is in compliance with the state's Growth Management Act. The hearings board is expected to issue a schedule for hearing and deciding the petitions early in 2005.

Urban growth boundaries

Determining new urban growth boundaries was a major focus of the plan update completed in September. The boundaries define the urban growth areas—lands to be characterized by urban-type development for jobs and homes.

The updated plan adds 5,688 acres, or 8.9 square miles, to urban growth areas countywide.

Vancouver and Battle Ground urban areas received the most additional land. Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, and Washougal each received smaller boundary expansions, while the urban growth boundary for Yacolt remained unchanged. All additions were contiguous to urban growth boundaries established in 1994.

Maps of the urban growth areas now in effect for each city are available for reference and review at the offices of the county's Community Development Department, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver, and on

the county's Web site at www.clark.wa.gov/longrangeplan/review/bocc-recommendations.html.

Additional land for homes and jobs

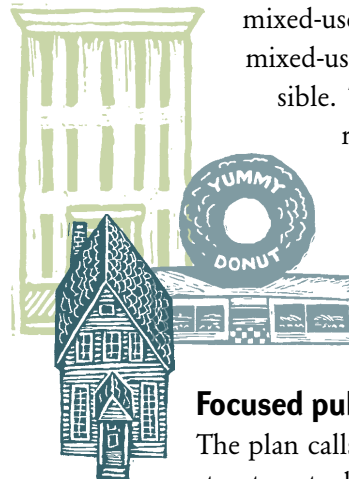
The plan adopted in 2004 provides for about 147,000 additional people by 2023, bringing the county's total planned population to about 518,000. The plan also includes industrial, commercial, mixed-use, and other business sites that have the potential to accommodate about 68,000 new jobs on land currently classified as vacant and buildable. In addition, there is capacity to locate new jobs on land not included in the vacant and buildable lands inventory. These additional potential work sites include locations

such as the "Section 30" portion of the east Vancouver area. Potential job sites also include schools and other tax-exempt property.

Strategies for urban holding and mixed use

All of the expanded urban growth areas now have urban holding overlay zones. In 2005, the Board of County Commissioners will be considering conditions under which the holding should be lifted to allow development to proceed.

Based on recommendations of a citizens' task force, the commissioners recently updated the county's mixed-use ordinance to make mixed-use development more feasible. The committee plans to recommend additional changes in 2005 to further adapt mixed-use concepts to conditions in Clark County.



Focused public investment areas

The plan calls for investment in infrastructure to help create new employment opportunities. Priority areas include Hazel Dell/Highway 99, St. Johns/Barberton, and the "Discovery Corridor" north of 134th Street along Interstate 5.

Planning for transportation projects has now been updated to support this goal. *Projects included in the current six-year transportation improvement program are listed in the Public Works/Transportation portion of the county Web site at www.clark.wa.gov/TIP/index.html.*

Duration of the plan

As adopted, the plan is intended to guide growth through December 2023. However, there are a number of points at which the plan may change within the next 10 years.

Key dates:

- The county may review the boundaries in 2009, based on county code.
- The county must review the plan in 2011, under state law.
- The county must review the boundaries by 2014, under state law.

There are a number of “triggers” that could also prompt the commissioners to make changes, including:

- 75 percent of residential lands have been developed
- 75 percent of commercial lands have been developed
- 50 percent of industrial lands have been developed

Appeals pending

Owners have petitioned to have land added to the Vancouver (Philbrook property), Battle Ground (Lear property), and Ridgefield (Walker Farms, Mt. View Dairy) urban growth boundaries. Meanwhile, the city of Battle Ground is seeking a broad review of its urban growth boundary. Business and environmental groups are likewise petitioning for a broad review of the

county’s planning methods and assumptions.

Several petitioners are testing the “urban holding” designation applied to areas that the Board of County Commissioners brought into the urban growth areas this year. Urban holding indicates that lands cannot be developed until sufficient infrastructure is in place to support urban development.

The commissioners plan to meet in January 2005 to discuss the county’s response to the appeals.

The Growth Management Hearings Board

As mentioned previously, the hearings board’s function is to determine whether the plan provisions that are being appealed comply with the state’s Growth Management Act. Hearings board decisions may be further appealed through the state court system.

The Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board, whose jurisdiction includes Clark County, comprises three members appointed by the governor—Holly Gad-baw, who lives in Thurston County; Margery Hite, from

Skagit County; and Gayle Rothrock, from Clark County.

More information about the hearings board can be found at www.gmhbb.wa.gov/western/index.html.

Keeping track of new development

The plan provides the foundation for specific development projects. A weekly report on proposed projects is available from the Development Services division of the Community Development department. *The report is available on the county’s Web site at www.clark.wa.gov/commdev/development/proposedev.html or by calling (360) 397-2375 ext. 4997.*



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Long Range Planning

(360) 397-2375 ext. 4558

E-mail: longrang@clark.wa.gov

www.clark.wa.gov/longrangeplan/review/index.html

January 2005